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Senate protects schools, students from penalties over missing MEAP tests

Lansing – The Senate today approved Senate Bill 787, which protects students and schools from being penalized if their Michigan Educational Assessment Program answer sheets are lost by the Michigan Department of Education or a state contractor, Sen. Bill Hardiman (R-Kentwood) announced.

"My bill protects districts and particularly Grand Rapids Public Schools from errors they aren't responsible for," Hardiman said. "Students and parents deserve this peace of mind."

Nine school districts in Michigan have had some MEAP answer sheets lost, leaving educators and parents to worry the state could sanction them for not having test results for all students. About 3,400 answer sheets are missing statewide. Of those, about 1,000 are from Grand Rapids schools.

"I'm glad to see this legislation move so quickly," said Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland), chairman of the Education Committee, which recommended SB 787. "My committee worked with education department officials to solve this issue before schools were affected."

Under SB 787, schools could not be unfairly designated as unaccredited or as not maintaining federal adequate yearly progress as required by the No Child Left Behind Act because of missing results.

The bill now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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Audio Advisory: Audio clips of Sen. Hardiman are available on the Internet at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire or by phone at (517) 373-4000.